Salvation: A Non-Negotiable, Legally Binding Contract with God

Some Call it Legalism

> **"When there's something in the Bible that churches don't like, they call it legalism."**
> **Leonard Ravenhill**

I don't often quote men in my articles but this one rings so true that I have to share it. So often we hear the word 'legalism' thrown around concerning Christians who confront sin, what exactly does it mean? Perhaps we should find out:

> **le·gal·ism [noun]**
> **Strict adherence, or the principle of strict adherence, to law or prescription, especially to the letter rather than the spirit.**

Now I'm not a lawyer by any stretch of the imagination, however I have a few key points I need to make. Can the case be made that Christianity requires strict adherence to law or prescription? In a word, yes. We must each adhere to the letter of the law as it was written upon our hearts; guided by the conviction of the Holy Spirit and confirmed by scripture.

A Legally Binding Contract

> **con·tract [noun]**
> **1. An agreement between two or more parties for the doing or not doing of something specified.**

> **cov·e·nant [noun]**
> **An agreement, usually formal, between two or more persons to do or not do something specified.**

What God has shown me is that when we 'accept Christ' we have entered into a legally binding contractual agreement with Him. There is quid pro quo involved, tit for tat. God made provision for this offer and fulfilled the prerequisites by sending His Son to die on the cross for you.The short version of this contract is **John 3:16 (KJV)**; God offers us eternal life on the condition that we believe in His Son. But this contract has certain conditions for us to fulfill and thus can be broken by us.

> **Can two walk together, except they be agreed?**
> **Amos 3:3 (KJV)**

If we accept these terms we must adhere to this contract or covenant; as you can see both mean the same thing. The old covenant/contract required adherence to the law written on tablets of stone, but we are no longer under the law. The new covenant/contract requires adherence to the law written upon our hearts by the presence of the

Holy Spirit (**2 Corinthians 3:3 KJV**).

> **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**
> **The same was in the beginning with God.**
> **John 1:1-2 (KJV)**

Jesus Christ is the Word of God made flesh. Our belief in Him is not as a child believes in Santa Claus or the Easter bunny; it requires action. We are justified by our faith (Romans 4). The bible is the Word of God in printed form. Within it the specific terms and conditions (small print) of God's offer of salvation to us are outlined.

A Conditional Contract

> **Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**
> **Philippians 2:12 (KJV)**

Being required by God to work out our salvation with fear and trembling clearly demonstrates that we not only have a part to play, but must indeed strictly adhere to the conditions of this contract. We must pore over our bibles like Philadelphia lawyers and understand every minute detail of this contract we have entered into with God. Is this starting to sound like legalism to you yet?

> **Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**
> **2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV)**

But understanding this legally binding contract we have entered into with God is not enough. We must bring our lives into agreement with it as outlined in the Word of God; point by point, as the Holy Spirit leads. This contract we have entered into is never to be taken lightly; after all, Jesus signed it with His own blood. At the end of this life there's Judgment day. Seeing as we have entered into a contract with God this is the day we all must stand before our Supreme Judge as He determines whether we have upheld our end of the deal. There will be weeping and Gnashing of teeth.

> **Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.**
> **Proverbs 27:6 (KJV)**

If only we were all working out our salvation. Then when a brother or sister pointed out an area we need to work on we would be examining ourselves instead of calling it legalism. But instead we make excuses for our behavior and try to cover our sins. We accuse them of judging us and try to make them feel bad for our own faults.

A Contract between Two Parties

> **And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.**
> **1 John 2:2 (KJV)**

Another essential point of this contract is to understand who exactly the involved parties are. When Jesus went and died on the cross He didn't die for sinners collectively. He died for every single human being ever born, whether they accepted His offer or not, as individuals. He died for you, and me.

> **For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;**
> **1 Timothy 2:5 (KJV)**

Why is this important? Because modern Christianity treats this contract as if they could hand it over to their church or pastor to handle for them, like a lawyer. But Christ is our one and only Mediator before our Judge, there is no other who can represent us before Him. As stated above we must work out our salvation with fear and trembling, as individuals. We must *personally* study our King James bible and obey it to the best of our understanding; we must *personally* get upon our knees and talk to our Heavenly Counselor. *There is either a personal relationship, or none at all.* If we leave it to someone else then it is they who are working out our salvation, not us. God has no step children.

A Non-Negotiable Contract

Some of us try to reject God's offer to us and make our own contract. Does God entertain offers? How much will you offer God for the blood of His Son to wash away your sins? What will you offer? Good works? Money? Salvation can only be obtained on His terms. We have a name for man's attempts to Reach God on our own terms: Religion. Look at the example of Cain; he offered God his sacrifice of the best of the garden (**Genesis 4:1-5** KJV). Did God accept it? No, He did not.

At the risk of seeming gimmicky I feel I should ask you all to do something just to drive home the importance of this teaching. I want you to first take this article into your prayer closet with you. Ask God to show you it is true if He hasn't already. Next I want you to get a pen and write the following in your King James Bible:

> **"I hereby unequivocally agree to all the terms and conditions within this contract and vow to do my best to obey them".**

Sign your name to this legal document. Now when someone comes to you with strange doctrines from some pastor, web page or video I want you to refer to this contract you and God have agreed upon together. Is what they are saying outlined in your bible? What about when your flesh wants something, does the contract I signed allow it? We must work out the terms of our contract with fear and trembling.